ALABAMA WING CIVIL AIR PATROL

CONTINUITY BOOK:

WEBMASTER

------ OPEN VERSION -----

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This document contains information on access to the Wing web site and should be restricted to those with a need-to-know.

Description of responsibilities:

The Webmaster is not an "official" Wing staff position. In Alabama Wing the Webmaster operates within the communications staff and, as such, acts as an Assistant Communications Officer, coordinating his activities with the Director of Communications.

The webmaster facilitates communications within the Wing by the following activities:

- Generates interest in, and the use of, internet-based communications among the Wing members

- Creates, maintains, and improves the Alabama Wing internet web pages

- Maintains and moderates the email distribution lists operated by the Wing.

- Provides training and assistance to Wing staff and members in the use of internet-based communications.

- Recommends improvements in this area to the Commander.

- Makes an annual budget recommendation.

Description of internet services

The Wing web pages and email distribution lists are hosted on a commercial internet server. The hosting service is provided by the DataRealm Company, located in Philadelphia, PA. This host site was selected after an investigation of the many hosting services available. This location provides a relatively inexpensive web hosting service. Unlike most other web hosts, DataRealm does provide email distribution list services. Email distribution has become a primary need for the Wing. Also, DataRealm is NOT an Internet Service Provider (ISP). You must have an internet account with someone else in order to access the DataRealm server.

There are two services provided by DataRealm:

- An internet web page

- Email distribution lists

The internet web pages provide both intra-Wing and inter-Wing information for Wing members. Information on the web site includes

- Wing recurring reports
- Wing forms
- Access to National CAP forms
- Wing calendar
- Wing staff list
- ES information
- Communications information
- PAO information
- Safety information

There are currently three email distribution lists:

- Squadron commanders and Wing staff (sqcc@mail.serve.com)
- Wing staff (alstaff@mail.serve.com)
- All members (alcap-all@mail.serve.com)

Monthly costs of operation of the site:

Nonprofit basic service:	$ 5.00
Assignment of an IP address	$10.00
Email lists @$5.00 ea.	$15.00
Total:	$30.00

Or $180.00 semiannually, currently billed to my personal credit card.

Access to the DataRealm server

The Wing web site has these addresses:

- Basic (assigned by DataRealm): **http://www.serve.com/alwg/**

- A static IP address (assigned by DataRealm): 207.8.159.60

- Domain name (assigned by John Clear): **http://www.alwg.cap.gov/**

Note: John Clear <jac@panix.com> is a CAP member and is the administrator of the ".cap.gov" top level domain name.. As such, he created the alwg.cap.gov subdomain name and "pointed" it to the Wing IP address. The static IP address is required in order to point the desired domain name to the site. If the hosting service is changed, the IP

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address will change. Therefore John Clear must be informed to point the subdomain name to the new IP address. Because we are using a ".gov" top level domain, there are no annual domain name registration fees.

DataRealm has created an administrative site to edit the web page and the email lists. It is located at:

http://self.serve.com/admin/(opening)?dir=/

The user id is: xxxx
Password is: xxxx

From this page all administrative activities for the site can be performed, including changes in the billing and account information, editing of web pages, and updates to the email distribution lists.

Web page editing

DataRealm has enabled the use of the Microsoft FrontPage 98 drivers, so that edits can be made to the web site online using a local copy of FrontPage 98

Alternatively, editing can be done easily using Netscape Composer, an HTML editor available free from Netscape. If this method is chosen, the edits are done locally and then must be uploaded. The preferred method to upload local files created in this way is the use of the DataRealm admin site.

Email list updates

Email addresses are located both on the web site (e-mail.html and staff.html) and on the "majordomo list server." Both must be updated. The majordomo list, located on the DataRealm server actually sends the messages, but people can see their addresses on the web sites. To update an email list from the Admin page, click on [Mailing Lists].
This links to the "Mailing Lists" page. From this point, select the list to be modified and enter the password when prompted. For access to all of the mailing lists, the password is "xxxx."

The mail lists passwords can be modified by editing the config file for each list. The config file is used for all option settings for each of the mail lists.

All commanders (or their representatives) and wing staff members are included in the list: sqcc@mail.serve.com. Any list member may post to this list without prior approval.
All wing staff with email addresses are included in the list: alstaff@mail.serve.com. Any list member may post to this list without prior approval.

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All members are included in alcap-all@mail.serve.com. The "alcap-all" list is moderated, which means that the list owner must approve all posts to this list, or the poster must include a password phrase in the first line of the message text. Note that the password phrase must be in lower case. When the message is retransmitted, the password phrase and the blank line below it are stripped out and are not sent to the recipients.

Example:

> <u>To</u>: alcap-all@mail.serve.com
> <u>From</u>: <jkatkins@ieee.org>
> <u>Subject</u>: Reply Attn to: DC/Alwg
>
> <u>Message text</u>:
> approved: xxxx
>
> Begin the message on the third line down and continue until
> The message is complete.
>
> FOR THE COMMANDER:
>
> John Atkins
> LTC   CAP

Use of Adobe PDF documents

In order to preserve the look and pagination of documents, the Adobe company has created a "portable document format" (PDF) which will create a specialized format document by "printing" to the Adobe software from any Windows-based program that uses standard Windows print techniques. The document has a ".pdf" suffix that can be viewed by the free Adobe Reader. In addition, these pdf documents can be password-protected. I chose this format instead of the Microsoft Word format for Alabama CAP documents for these reasons:

- Not everyone has access the latest version of MS Word, making it difficult to create a widely readable document.

- Documents in HTML format do not print in an easily paginated format.

- The Adobe pdf file creation software is available for any platform; therefore, it is easily usable by any staff member, regardless of computer or operating system.

- The files are easily password protected, providing a measure of security for semisensitive documents - such as those with addresses and telephone numbers.

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- The Adobe Acrobat (file creation) software is readily available for about $70.00 with discount.

- Adobe Acrobat will also create a PDF document from a scanned document or from an electronically received fax.

- The Adobe Reader is integratable into Netscape and Microsoft web browsers so that a hyperlink to a pdf document is viewed and is printable from within the browser.

Those documents with password protection use a common password: "xxxx."

Password protected documents have a security password to prevent changes to the document. I have used "xxxx" as the security password.

Summary

This is an overview of the duties and responsibilities of the Webmaster, with documentation of how to access the web site and the email distribution lists. This function requires a commitment to keep the email lists and form as up-to-date as possible. Some knowledge of web page coding is needed, but can be learned by on the job training. The current web editing tools make this task easier.

It is necessary to constantly provide training and coaching to people on how to use the email distribution lists.

It is also necessary to keep the latest forms and reports available so that the web site will be useful.

ATTACHMENTS:

DataRealm documentation

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